1: Karsten--236 (1916-18) 1935 Jivaro-1
116, 881, 841, 276 (1928-29)

"When the first signs of puberty appear, an important epoch in the life of the Jibaro girl begins. As among all Indians, menstruation is looked upon by the Jibaros as a mysterious process, and when it appears for the first time in a girl various precautions are considered necessary. I have mentioned before that the Indians ascribe menstruation to the moon (nantu weinikama, 'the moon has seen her'), which is also believed to have a mysterious influence upon conception. The first menstruation is called numbuin (from numba, 'blood') and generally appears when the girl is about 8 to 10 years old. When the mother realises what is the matter with the girl she at once takes her down to the river, where she washes her with a big leaf called yambáki. She has now to submit to certain taboos for four days. She is not allowed to pass the nights in the house, but sleeps in a small shelter specially made for her in the plantation in the neighbourhood, whither she is accompanied in the evening by the other women. While in the shelter, she can eat or drink nothing except tobacco water, which is given her in repeated doses by an old woman. The girl, however, is not obliged to stay there during the day. As soon as the sun rises she can leave the shelter and return to the house where she spends the day, but she is obliged to diet strictly. At the same time a small drinking-feast is arranged. Several piningas with manioc-beer are placed in a row; among these there is a small one containing only the 'cream' of the beer and a piece of manioc. This pininga is for the tsángrama, as the girl is called. She is allowed to eat nothing during the four

days except this small quantity of manioc, and she is considered so taboo that she can touch no objects in the house with her hands. In the evening, as usual, she has to go to the shelter where she again receives tobacco water from the hands of the old woman, and so on. The tobacco medicine is supposed to fill her with power and to protect her against evil spirits who are attacking her, but it is also calculated to produce dreams for her, since the Numbuén, feast has reference at the same time to the girl's future obligations as a housewife."

1: Karsten--236-237 (1916-18) 1935 Jivaro
116, 881 (1928-29)

"If the girl is not betrothed, no further feast is arranged for her. On the other hand, if she has a fiancé, the appearance of the first menses is, for the latter and for the girl's parents, a sign to start preparing the great feast Noa tsangu which has already been described. As I have stated, it is at this epoch that her education properly begins, being supervised by her future husband and carried on very methodically. The [237] girl accompanies her mother and other older women everywhere, especially to the plantations, and is constantly receiving instructions from them as to how the manioc, sweet potatoes, beans, earth-nuts, and other roots and plants shall be planted and tended. At home she takes part in all those occupations which are incumbent on a married woman, and when guests arrive and the women of the house step forward to serve them nihamánchi, the young girl is always one of them."

1: Karsten--238-241 (1916-18) 1935 Jivaro-1
116, 881 (1928-29)

"Both maikoa and another narcotic medicine, tobacco, is however chiefly taken on another occasion in the life of the Jibaro youth, namely, when he is initiated into manhood at puberty, at an age of about 15 or 16 years. On this occasion one of the great feasts of the Jibaros is arranged, the one known under the name of Kusúpani and corresponding to the Noa tsangu of the women. The preparations for this feast are the usual ones: new plantations must be made, new domestic animals, swine and hens, must be bred, etc. It is natural therefore that these preparations should require a long time, and in fact, the feast does not take place until after the lapse of two or three years. During these years the young boy has to diet strictly, the rules as to what kind of food is forbidden to him being much the same as in other similar cases. Thus the flesh of the principal domestic animals, the swine and the hens, is forbidden to him, precisely because the object of the feast is in part to augment the numbers of these animals. Other animals which are taboo as food to him are the wild hog, the paca, concerning which certain superstitious ideas are held, the armadillo, and most birds of the forest. Nor is he allowed to eat big fish like the sheat-fish and the one called wambi; [239] he has to content himself with small sardine-like fish of the kind the Indians eat when they are dieting. If one asks the Indians what will happen if he infringes these rules, the answer is invariably that the object of the feast will not be attained, the crops will not grow well, the swine and the hens will not increase, the

young boy himself will not become a man but will soon die, etc. Such being the consequences of ignoring the rules of diet, it is natural that the boy in whose honour the feast is arranged should conscientiously submit to them and do everything that custom demands of him. When we further consider that during some months previous to the feast he has to behave like a penitent, that he cannot even keep his long hair untied or wear the clothes and ornaments of full-grown men, that he is forbidden to go out hunting and to use lance and blowgun and poisoned arrows, we can understand that the very preparation for the feast is for the young Indian a remarkable exercise in privation and self-control.

The first day of the Kusúpani has the same name as the first day of all feasts: Utsándowai, 'the opening of the feast'. Early in the morning the invited guests enter the house in solemn procession, whereupon a drinking-bout takes place, which is followed by an ordinary meal. The principal ceremonies are performed on the second and third days, and they mainly consist in giving the novice tobacco in different forms and in repeated doses; the old man who acts as a priest (whuéa) makes him take tobacco juice, and he must inhale tobacco smoke. The priest has made a number of big cigars and attached them to a string at regular intervals from one another, the string hanging from one of the central poles of the house. Every time that he wishes to give the novice tobacco he takes one of the cigars from the string, puts it into a long tube of bamboo,

and lights it, using the tube as a mouth-piece. He first draws the smoke into his own mouth and then blows it directly into the mouth of the novice, who has to swallow the smoke and is nearly suffocated. This is repeated several times until the whole cigar is consumed. Immediately after this the priest gives the novice tobacco in liquid form. For this purpose he chews the leaves carefully, spits them out, together with much saliva, into a maize leaf, blows some more tobacco smoke on it, and stirs the whole mass carefully with his finger, whereupon he gives it to the novice to drink. This ceremony is repeated six to eight times on each of the two days of the feast proper, and the strong tobacco medicine cannot of course fail to produce very powerful effects on the youth who receives them on an empty stomach. In the narcotic sleep which [240] will follows, [sic] and in the visions provoked by the drinking of maikoa, with which the feast will end, the novice will see both the arútama and other spirits, who give him advice and information concerning his future.

Among some Jibaro tribes the old man, when blowing smoke, does not use any bamboo tube; he places the burning end of the cigar in his own mouth and the opposite end in the mouth of the novice, blowing vigorously, and the novice has to swallow the smoke.

The Kusúpani ends, like all feasts, with the slaughter of the swine; the novice is ceremonially dressed and painted with genipa, and lastly comes the solemn drinking of

the manioc-wine, whereupon the guests leave. After the feast is thus ended, the novice still has to undergo a concluding ceremony which is rather of a private nature: the drinking of maikoa. This at any rate is the custom among the Upano and Santiago tribes, who celebrate the Kusúpani feast. The drinking of the narcotic generally takes place in the house, but if the youth wishes, he may go to the forest. In the first case all weapons, knives, and dangerous objects are removed so that the youth, in his narcotic condition, may not do any harm. The oldest man in the family prepares the drink in a pininga and gives it to the boy to drink, having muttered an incantation over it. The old man also takes care of him after he has become intoxicated. The effects are soon visible: the old man seizes the narcotized boy from behind with both arms and holds him in this way until he falls asleep. The boy incessantly shouts: tuh, tuh, tuh, tiga, tiga, tiga, as if he were summoning the demons. The old man, again, tries to hasten the coming of the favourable visions by frequently repeating the following words: Tu puhústa, kanárta, wuimekta, aha ista, mama ísta, pa'ándama ísta, kuchi ísta, atáshi ísta, muitsa ísta, nihamánchi ísta, and so on, that is: "lie down, fall asleep, behold (in visions), behold fields, behold manioc, behold plantains, behold swine, behold hens, behold manioc pots, behold manioc-beer!", etc. Thus both of them, the old man holding the boy with his arms from behind, stagger to and fro in the house, until at last the narcotized boy completely loses consciousness. But even during sleep he has to be

watched attentively because the supposed visions often make him start up out of his sleep and he frequently even becomes violent.

If the novice goes out in the forest the old man accompanies him, gives him tobacco water, makes him take a bath in a waterfall, and then prepares the maikoa in the shelter, looking after him when the effects [241] of it begin to appear. They remain in the forest for three days and nights.

Great attention is, of course, paid to the dreams of the Jibaro youth because in a way they decide his whole future. It is the business of the oldest men of the family to interpret them and to state whether they have been good or bad. The question as to what kinds of dream are regarded as 'good' or 'bad' and the kinds of vision seen will be discussed in the chapter on divination."

1: Karsten--241-242 (1916-18) 1935 Jivaro-1
116, 881, 276 (1928-29)

"Among the Achuares of the Pastaza the initiation into manhood consists only in drinking maikoa. When the boys attain the age of puberty, which means that they are received among the men and warriors, are allowed to marry, and so on, the following drinking-ceremony takes place. The oldest men of the family or tribe arrange themselves in two parallel rows facing each other. Each man holds a pininga containing a small quantity of maikoa. The novice must now go from the one to the other in due order and take a sip from each pininga, starting with the oldest member of the family. Generally it is easy for him to do this with the first ones, but frequently it is impossible for him to drink from the clay vessels of the last men in the rows. Their contents are then given him in the form of a clyster, the maikoa quantity being injected into his rectum by means of a tube (nángu) consisting of the hollow stem of the sanahoria plant (Daucus). It is considered absolutely necessary, it should be understood, that the novice should receive something from the clay vessel of each man.

When the young man has finished drinking the oldest man says to him: 'Do you know now why you have drunk maikoa? 'Yes', the youth answers, 'it is in order that I may become a real man and a brave warrior and that I may be able to marry.'

When the effects of the narcotic manifest themselves in the Jibaro youth and he begins to behave in a foolish way or threatens to become violent, the old man seizes him by the arm, restrains him, and says to him: 'Don't you remember that you have taken

maikoa, what do you intend to do, where are you going?' Then the youth tries to control himself and sits down.

After the lapse of some weeks or months the novice must again drink maikoa in the same way as before, some time later for the third time, and after the lapse of the same period for the fourth time. It is not until then that his noviciate ends and he is allowed to marry.

I have related the puberty ceremonies of the Jibaros, and I have [242] now to add a few words as to the significance of the Kusúpani feast, especially as far as the tobacco rites are concerned. The significance of these rites is essentially the same as that of the tobacco ceremonies performed at the feast Noa tsangu. The spirit of tobacco is conjured and its wonderful power is transferred to the boy, who will be filled with it not only for the moment but for many years to come, nay, for his whole life. This power will automatically show itself in all the work and occupations incumbent on him as a male member of society. He will be a brave and successful warrior and be able to kill many enemies; he will be skilled in managing the lance and the blowgun and bring down much game in hunting; he will be dexterous in spearing the big fish and in catching small fish with varvasco poison. But this is not all. The spirits who appear to him in narcotic sleep are believed to teach him such matters also as normally concern directly

only the women, above all as regards the breeding of domestic animals and the cultivation of the fields. This also explains the fact that the newly-initiated Jibaro youth is for some time the adviser of the women in the work and occupations which properly belong entirely to the female domain. Just as the feast Noa tsangu and--as we shall presently see-- the great victory-feast, so the Kusúpani among other things is believed to have the effect of 'increasing the swine and the hens' (kuchi, atáshi pamboártinyu) and of favourably influencing the growth of the crops."

1: Karsten--242 (1916-18) 1935 Jivaro
116, 881, 177, 276, 861 (1928-29)

"So far I have only related the puberty ceremonies of the Jibaro Indians. Of the CANELOS INDIANS there is, on this point, little to say. There is no doubt that formerly they observed much the same customs as the savage Jibaros, but with the dissolution of their tribal organization, and owing the influence of Christian civilization, these customs already belong to the past. Thus although, as we shall see, narcotics play a quite important part among them, they have no puberty ceremonies in the proper sense of the word either for boys or girls, and being as they are, at least nominally, children of the mission, their own educational systems have long ago degenerated. This is particularly true of the moral influence of their native education. On the other hand, the Canelos Indians also give their children instruction in certain occupations which, according to their division of labour, are incumbent on men and on women, as in certain industrial tasks--for instance the making of arrow-poison, drums, etc., and in pottery making--which are still on a comparatively high level among these half-civilized Indians."

34:Harner E-4, 5 (1956-1969)1973 SD9 Jivaro SD9



boys perform most of the tasks of their
865 fathers, including participation in the defense of the house and in attacks on enemies. A son may accompany his father on a raid as early as the age of six; but it is more common for this to happen when he is nine or older.

884 When a boy reaches the age of about sixteen, he formally
[825] undertakes to establish his adult status by going into the forest, killing a tree sloth, and making a *tsantsa* of its head (for the supernatural reasons, see pp. 143–49). Then two *tsantsa* feasts of celebration are given by the father or other older male relative in which all the ritual precautions of the human head *tsantsa* celebration are observed, although the feasting is not as lavish.

884 With the second feast, the transition of the head-taker into
292 adult life is implicitly recognized, and he is now entitled to
301 wear the *etsemat*, the basic headpiece of Jívaro men, con-
[237] sisting of a long cotton band with a red and yellow toucan
[721] feather tassel (see Plates 12–15). The donning of this headband has significant overtones since it is used by men not only to keep their hair in place but also in war to hang a human head from the shoulder. He may also now carve a
884 round stool for himself, although he usually does not do this
[721] until, or unless, he has participated in a regular killing expedition. Finally, the giving of the feasts means that he is en-
[582] titled to get married, but he probably will not actually do this until he is about *twenty-one to twenty-three years old.*

• 891 A somewhat analogous pair of feasts is given as puberty
884 celebrations for a girl. Both feasts are sponsored by the girl's father, the first being a minor affair of two days' length; the second being given about half a year later, after her family has been able to accumulate enough chickens and
[824] pigs to feed a large number of guests for six or seven days.
[276] The supernatural aspect of this "coming out" celebration
[781]

34:Harner E-4, 5 (1956-1969)1973 SD9 Jivaro SD9



centers around the girl drinking water mixed with crushed green tobacco leaves in order to enter the supernatural world while sleeping in a nearby lean-to and to have dreams that will augur success in raising garden crops and domesticated animals. The feasts are known as *nua tsayu* (woman tobacco) or *kasakü*.

Polygyny is preferred in the sororal form because sisters are reputed to get along better with one another. A man normally hopes that his father-in-law (*ači*) eventually will give him all the latter's daughters as wives. Accordingly, the son-in-law's conscientious post-marital bride-service is usually performed to keep his wife's father favorably impressed, so that he will provide such additional brides. Thus men occasionally may obtain several sisters as wives. In such cases, the man is assured of an outstanding production of beer and food and, presumably, a relatively tranquil polygynous family.

Wives who are sisters usually work out a hierarchical relationship, with the eldest (characteristically the first bride) assuming direction of activities within the house. The second wife, likewise, somewhat dominates the third, and so on. Still, each wife has her own section of the garden which she exclusively works, her own cook-fire, bed, and pottery vessels. Not uncommonly, when a man marries a widow who has an unmarried daughter, the daughter will eventually, and casually, become his second wife. In such cases of stepdaughter marriage, the mother tends to retain a relatively dominant position over her daughter. The situation is usually more individualistic in the case of wives who are not sisters or mothers and daughters. These tend to be too antagonistic to submit to a consistent dominant-subordinate relationship in household activities.

34:Harner E-4. 5 (1956-1969)1973 SD9 Jivaro SD9



796 same function. Normally, however, the tree sloth trophy is
825 made and used by teen-age boys for their first *tsantsa* feasts,
[881] which are only two in number and hosted by their fathers or other close older male relatives.

## *The True Soul*

774 The "true" or "ordinary" soul, the *nekás wakaní*, is born at the same moment as the person and is possessed by every [826] living Jívaro, male or female. The true soul is present in the living individual primarily in the form of one's blood. Bleeding is therefore viewed as a process of soul-loss. This soul is passive during a person's real life and apparently is of relatively little interest to the Jívaro in terms of their total native belief systems.

775 When a person dies, this true soul leaves his body and, in invisible form, eventually returns to the site of the house where the deceased individual was born. There the soul lives in a spirit house identical to the one in which the deceased was born, except for the fact that the spirit house is invisible to the living. The true souls of other deceased members of the family are likewise dwelling in this house. Similarly, the true souls of former neighbors return to their original house sites as well. It is believed that the true souls conduct their household activities and visit each other just as they did when their possessors were alive. As the years pass, these souls move from house site to house site in the same order, and over the same span of time as they did when incorporated in living individuals.

One significant difference should be noted between this hereafter of the true soul and the real life of its former possessor: these souls are always hungry. Although they